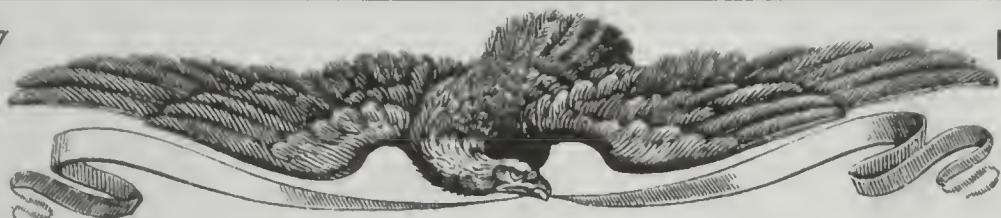


JOURNAL OF THE  
**BARBER COIN COLLECTORS' SOCIETY**

Volume 17

Number 1



**2006**

**BCCS Becomes a FUN Member Club**



Accepting the club gavel from an unidentified Florida United Numismatists (FUN) official at the January 2006 FUN Convention is BCCS webmaster John Frost (holding the gavel)

*Photo courtesy of FUN*

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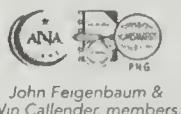
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Advancing the Art of Collecting

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BARBER COIN COLLECTORS' SOCIETY

Founded in 1989 by Steve Epstein  
ANA Club Member C-146266

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Welcome to the first Barber Society issue for the 2006 year.

I find it interesting to view Barber coins in the overall perspective of numismatics. For example, for those who collect Washington quarters or Roosevelt dimes, minting history or varieties are not part of the usual knowledge base for these series. Alternatively, early Bust coinage is driven by die varieties and die marriages and possible new discoveries of such entities. I see Barber coins in the middle of the above. Major varieties are unusual while interest lies below the well-documented micro "O" mintmark of 1892 halves or 1905 dimes.

Is there an opportunity for research in the Barber series? A recent issue of *Coin World* dated Feb 27, 2006 provides an exciting affirmative. The front page story by writers Richard Kelly and Nancy Oliver provides the background for the San Francisco Mint record of 1894 dimes and a justification for 24 pieces. Please read this if you haven't already. If I receive a handful of requests, I'll ask Eileen Ribar about reprinting the text of the article.

I am rather amazed at the material offered by major auction houses. Aside from condition census or registry set ultra condition coins, I am turned on by such offerings as the Heritage Jules Reiver Collection (over 5,000 coins primarily representing early copper and Bust half dimes thru dollars with most every listed die variety) or the continuing sale by Stack's of the John Ford Estate with virtually nothing listed in routine price sheets or even in the Red Book. Along with these stellar collections are auction listings of solid Barber material including multiple lists of 1895-O dimes, big-three rare quarters and tough-to-find branch mint halves. I suppose an upward coin market drives some of these eventful pleasures.

Please look to the last issue of year 2005 and the Population Census and Rarity Survey Form. Our membership is primarily collectors with limited portfolio investor types. If you purchase certified MS-67 plus Barbers, the better census data may reside in NGC and PCGS population reports. All the 'down-to earth' Barber collectors are here and their census and survey impressions are invaluable! Please submit your responses by the March 31 deadline.

I received an interesting note from a Barber dime collector asking how to obtain the last two dates for his set (there was no 1895-O but I won't list the dates provided). He had searched at some length for either coin (in strict EF) with no success. I provided some ideas (ask trusted dealers you used before, submit

wantlists, be flexible on grade) but I'd ask our membership for any thoughts on this provocative question. You can email me with any response or include this with your census/survey form in the mail to Eileen.

Numismatic regards,  
Phil Carrigan



## BCCS EDITOR'S MESSAGE

Many thanks to those of you who voted in the annual Literary Contest. Complete results are on page 19. I want to explain why Paul Green's two articles were not included on the ballot as one member commented that they were his two favorite articles this year and another member wrote in one of Paul's articles on the ballot and voted for it. Paul Green is not a member of the Barber Coin Collectors Society; he is a staff writer for *Numismatic News* and his articles are reprinted in the Journal with the permission of editor Dave Harper.

Those of you who have not as yet renewed your 2006 BCCS membership will find a renewal form inside your Journal. Please send in your annual dues as soon as possible.

## THE JOURNAL NEEDS YOUR ARTICLES!

Remember your article submission(s) automatically enters you in the BCCS Literary Contest. The article receiving the most member votes will win a 1st place prize of \$50. Second place prize will be \$25 and third place will be a free one year BCCS membership. So, make sure your membership is up to date and get your article to Eileen at the post office or e-mail address on page 3.

**DEADLINE FOR THE NEXT ISSUE IS June 1st**

# Investment Spotlight: Circulated Barber Quarters

By Rich Dula

While I doubt that investment is a primary concern for most BCCS members, it is certainly a consideration in our hobby. Coin collecting is not an inexpensive hobby and it can be surprising how much money a collection can represent. Too often we are led to believe only Mint State 65 coins are of "investment quality." Experienced collectors know better - very few people can afford to complete Barber sets in high grade mint state, even if they could find the coins. Circulated coins are what most people can afford to collect and have done very well as an investment.

From time to time, I evaluate current values of my collection and was very pleasantly surprised at the increase in value of my Barber Quarter collection. My set does not include any uncirculated coins, yet my set is worth 3 times what I paid for it. My set was formed from 1989 - 1992 and I always paid a little extra for coins that were nice for their grade. I was not thinking about investment; the coins were simply nicer looking than coins that just made the grade.

I used *Coin World Trends* (Sept. 2005) to value my collection and did not add any extra for coins that are premium coins for the grade when, in fact, they should be worth more. I have always used photograde as the reference for grading.

After viewing the table, it can be seen that each and every coin has increased in value. The key dates, as well as the recognized scarce dates, performed the best. However, some dates, such as 1897-S, were surprising performers. In 1990, it was not realized how scarce this coin was and my \$13.00 cost seems very reasonable when compared to its current *Trends* value of \$75.00. This value is actually quite conservative as I have seen this date in nice VG condition go for \$125.00 on eBay. While many of the prices I paid when forming this set seem like incredible bargains today, it might very well be that in 10-15 years from now, today's 2006 prices will also be viewed as bargains.

While *Trends* values can give an approximate retail value for your collection, what can you expect to receive if you actually sell your collection? This is ultimately the true value of a collection but, as I have no plans to sell my collection, how do I know what I could expect to receive? As I was preparing this article, an almost complete set of Barber quarters in VG condition came up for sale

on eBay. I have included a column of prices realized as well as a column of VG Trends (Sept. 2005) values for this collection.

As far as I know, this was sold by a private collector. All coins were nice original, uncleaned and problem-free. It was stated in this auction that it took over five years to complete this collection (there was no 1896-S, 1901-S or 1913-S, and the 1897-S was an AU specimen). Most of the coins were VG+ (VG10) - premium coins for the grade - which was reflected in the prices realized. While the entire collection was in VG, the 1897-S (one of my favorite underrated dates) was only AG. 39 of the coins realized over Trends and 31 went for under Trends values. The entire collection went for \$207.31 over Trends (postage and insurance were extra). What really helped realize higher prices was the fact that, in addition to quality obverse and reverse photos of the coins, there was an enlarged photo showing the word LIBERTY (or actually how many letters were left in LIBERTY) on the headband for each coin, as this is a key area to help determine grade.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Grade</u>	<u>Cost</u>	<u>Trends</u>	<u>eBay</u>	<u>Auction</u>	<u>Trends VG</u>
1892	VF	\$8.95	\$40.00		\$10.07	\$10.00
O	VG+	\$8.75	\$16.00		\$19.58	\$22.00
S	G+	\$10.00	\$27.00		\$92.01	\$50.00
1893	VG	\$3.75	\$9.00		\$3.89	\$7.00
O	VG-F	\$6.00	\$12.00		\$33.00	\$35.00
S	VG+	\$9.00	\$30.00		\$39.88	\$35.00
1894	G+	\$2.00	\$6.00		\$13.49	\$6.00
O	VG	\$3.50	\$15.00		\$31.00	\$20.00
S	VF/XF	\$30.00	\$60.00		\$22.86	\$15.00
1895	VF	\$18.00	\$40.00		\$15.79	\$10.00
O	VG	\$5.50	\$15.00		\$29.99	\$20.00
S/S VAR.	VF	\$50.00	\$110.00	REG MM	\$51.57	\$30.00
1896	VF+	\$19.00	\$40.00		\$14.50	\$10.00
O	F	\$45.00	\$90.00		\$52.76	\$50.00
S	G	\$105.00	\$750.00	NA		
1897	VF+	\$15.00	\$35.00		\$8.04	\$10.00
O	VG	\$10.00	\$35.00		\$32.38	\$40.00
S	VG/F	\$13.00	\$75.00	AG	\$28.56	
1898	G+	\$1.75	\$6.00		\$4.90	\$10.00
O	F/VF	\$37.00	\$65.00		\$20.50	\$30.00
S	F	\$7.00	\$45.00		\$20.50	\$20.00
1899	VG+	\$5.00	\$10.00		\$4.51	\$10.00
O	VG/F	\$7.00	\$18.00		\$18.88	\$20.00
S	F	\$20.00	\$75.00		\$66.57	\$30.00
1900	. VF	\$17.00	\$35.00		\$8.50	\$10.00
O	F/VF	\$30.00	\$60.00		\$29.44	\$30.00
S	AU	\$30.00	\$125.00		\$28.00	\$18.00
1901	VF	\$16.00	\$40.00		\$14.31	\$13.00

<u>Date</u>	<u>Grade</u>	<u>Cost</u>	<u>Trends</u>	<u>eBay</u>	<u>Auction</u>	<u>Trends VG</u>
O	VG	\$15.00	\$50.00		\$78.00	\$85.00
S	---	----	----	NA		
1902	VF	\$16.00	\$35.00		\$6.69	\$9.00
O	G+	\$4.00	\$9.00		\$26.58	\$20.00
S	F	\$18.00	\$50.00		\$28.88	\$25.00
1903	VG	\$2.00	\$9.00		\$10.51	\$9.00
O	F	\$17.00	\$40.00		\$16.49	\$13.00
S	VG	\$9.00	\$25.00		\$33.00	\$30.00
1904	VG	\$2.50	\$9.00		\$11.50	\$10.00
O	VF	\$22.00	\$85.00		\$15.50	\$25.00
1905	VF	\$18.00	\$35.00		\$14.04	\$14.00
O	G	\$2.50	\$15.00		\$28.77	\$35.00
S	VG/F	\$6.00	\$17.00		\$28.00	\$18.00
1906	VG	\$3.00	\$10.00		\$10.49	\$10.00
D	F	\$15.00	\$25.00		\$28.07	\$9.00
O	VG/F	\$4.00	\$10.00		\$16.49	\$10.00
1907	F	\$14.00	\$20.00		\$9.38	\$9.00
D	VF	\$27.50	\$50.00		\$20.50	\$9.00
O	G+	\$2.50	\$6.00		\$4.25	\$10.00
S	VF/XF	\$37.50	\$60.00		\$20.50	\$20.00
1908	G+	\$2.75	\$6.00		\$14.49	\$9.00
D	VF	\$11.00	\$35.00		\$2.38	\$9.00
O	VF	\$18.00	\$35.00		\$6.50	\$10.00
S	VG+	\$12.00	\$40.00		52.88	\$40.00
1909	VF	\$15.00	\$35.00		\$8.50	\$8.00
D	VF/XF	\$17.50	\$35.00		\$4.50	\$9.00
O	VG+	\$16.00	\$40.00		\$39.86	\$40.00
S	F/VF	\$12.00	\$35.00		\$5.25	\$12.00
1910	VF	\$25.00	\$45.00		\$13.07	\$11.00
D	VF/XF	\$30.00	\$65.00		\$11.51	\$12.00
1911	XF/AU	\$30.00	\$76.00		\$13.51	\$9.00
D	VG+	\$5.50	\$20.00		\$26.57	\$20.00
S	VF	\$37.50	\$70.00		\$21.72	\$15.00
1912	VF/XF	\$24.00	\$35.00		\$7.08	\$9.00
S	F	\$21.00	\$45.00		\$12.27	\$10.00
1913	VG+	\$12.00	\$24.00		\$45.00	\$27.00
D	VF/XF	\$24.00	\$50.00		\$8.06	\$13.00
S	G+/G	\$245.00	\$1200.00	NA		
1914	VG/F	\$2.50	\$8.00		\$7.59	\$8.00
D	VG	\$2.50	\$8.00		\$3.50	\$8.00
S	VG	\$45.00	\$100.00		\$88.88	\$100.00
1915	VF	\$12.00	\$30.00		\$7.49	\$8.00
D	F	\$2.50	\$30.00		\$3.81	\$8.00
S	F	\$16.00	\$30.00		\$24.50	\$14.00
1916	VF	\$23.00	\$30.00		\$7.89	\$8.00
D	G+	\$2.25	\$6.00		\$2.38	\$8.00

	<u>Cost</u>	<u>Trends</u>	<u>eBay Auction</u>	<u>Trends VG</u>
<b>Total</b>	\$1432.70	\$4566.00	\$1562.31	\$1355.00
<b>Increase</b>		\$3133.30		\$207.31

There are still many opportunities for further appreciation in the Barber Quarter series. One approach is to study current *Trends* values and look for sizable differences in valuations from one grade to the next. A few that stand out are listed below.

Date	Trends VG	Trends Fine
1896-O	\$30	\$90
1897-O	\$35	\$100
1909-O	\$40	\$90
1911-D	\$20	\$100
1913	\$24	\$75

These dates are quite scarce in nice problem-free VG and more people will opt for VGs for their collection because of the lower price. This will cause upward pressure on the price of these VG coins as I don't believe, even in VG grade, there are all that many available.

Another approach in discovering underrated/undervalued dates is your own personal experience. As you form your collection, pay attention to which dates/mintmarks were difficult to obtain. You may notice that some dates with relatively high mintages and small catalog values are surprisingly tough to find. Mintages and catalog values have no direct correlation to the availability of many Barber quarters. A case in point is the 1897-S. I realized in 1990 that this is quite a scarce coin in VG and up. At that time, I'd set out to buy as many as I could find at current catalog levels as I hoped to sell them in the future at a nice profit in order to pay for new coin purchases for my collection. After several years of searching, I was able to locate only two in VG condition.

I have been recently upgrading my Barber Quarter collection and was surprised at the difficulty I had finding 1903-P, 1904-P, 1906-P and 1908-P in Fine or VF condition. They all have large mintages for the series, yet it took me 4-5 months of searching on eBay to find acceptable examples (I still haven't found a 1906-P in F or VF). Are these "P" Mint coins sleepers worthy of higher values or were there simply none offered when I was looking for them? I guess only time will tell.

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# Barber Half Dollar Mintmark Types

## Part 9 (and last) in a Series

By Steve Hustad

The last time I wrote on mintmarks it was for the quarter series (No. 6 in this series) and it was springtime. Today it's late winter, but I can already smell spring here in the upper Midwest...or is that just wishful thinking? Actually, it's been a pretty good winter so far, not too much snow blowing, moderate temperatures, and great action at the bird feeder! What does all this have to do with Barber half-dollar mintmark types you ask? Well, nothing, but it does set the stage for this next (and last) article in the series. Winter = last, see? No? Ah well, let's get started.

When one can't afford to keep adding increasingly expensive coins to one's collection, one then turns his attention to those coins he already owns; also those observed in friends' collections, and seen on the coin show bourse. And when we do that, we notice new things. That, in part, is what prompted this series: those significant, yet typically unnoticed differences in the very mintmark and number punches that make up the changes that occur over the life span of these coins that fascinate us all so much. Not a big deal usually, as every coin series undergoes changes throughout its run, but it is indeed important when it affects which coins we collect, and how we collect them.

Unfortunately, the half-dollars aren't as much fun as the dimes or quarters in this regard because there aren't any overlaps that I've detected yet in mintmark styles. What I mean by that is there is not more than one style being used in the same year, thus creating a collectible variety. However, the half-dollar series did undergo the same changes, and the times they occurred and the style/size differences pretty much mirror the other two series in all the other important ways.

As with the quarters and dimes, I keep detailed records of each half-dollar I buy and study its characteristics, and I go back over the collection again and again looking for different and/or new things from time to time. While studying the various series I noticed some differences in the mintmarks of different years. This is not counting things like filled serifs, die chips, and extreme die wear that can change their appearance. What I'm pointing out here is the mintmark's logo-type style. With any luck, perhaps someday we'll discover some overlaps, but until that day, let's at least lay down the groundwork.

The half-dollar mintmarks don't exhibit the same wide variety as the dimes do (see previous installment in this series), but they do show a bit more than the quarters (without the overlaps). All are still interesting. Let's begin describing them:

### **'S' Mintmark Style A, 1892 – 1899:**

The first 'S' mintmark plate illustrates what I call "Style A," and shows the size and style of the mintmark punch used from inception in 1892 through and including the 1899 minted pieces. As with the previous series, this punch is identical to that used on the Liberty Seated series. The era demanded their use until worn out I'm sure.

As with "Style A" used with the quarters, this style's characteristics include a fat and 'squarish' looking 'S' with nearly closed loops and tall serifs. As with the dimes and quarters, when well-worn (or from a die chip) the inner loops can become closed and filled looking, but this is from wear, damage, or dirt and is not a distinct die variety.

Unfortunately, I've observed no overlap with 1899 or 1900 dated pieces with the next style - yet anyway – but I will keep looking!

### **'S' Mintmark Style B, 1900 – 1911:**

The second 'S' mintmark plate illustrates what I call "Style B" and pictures the 'middle' style and size used until 1911.

This mintmark looks like style "A" with clipped tips (shorter serif extensions). Also, the central diagonal section is noticeably slimmer, with a bit more open serifs. This mintmark punch still retains much of the 'squarish' look of "Style A." Again, no overlapping yet noticed with the previous type, or the following.

### **'S' Mintmark Style C, 1912 - 1915:**

The third 'S' mintmark plate illustrates what I call "Style C," and pictures the third and last style used up until the end of the Barber half-dollar series (of course, no halves were coined in 1916).

This 'S' mintmark punch is now noticeably rounder and is quite similar to the style used on the dimes from 1892 - 1899 (Dimes, "Style "A") and quarters during the similar period (Quarters, "Style B").

Again, no overlap with previously dated pieces, but we'll keep looking, because you never know what you'll find! In fact, I'm amazed at the new discoveries still coming to light after all these years of study by so many dedicated enthusiasts.

siasts, and even more amazed at the accidental discoveries found in ‘fill dirt’ piles by collecting amateurs! (See *Coin World*’s recent article, and subsequent auction sale of the very rare 1817/4 Bust half-dollar. Wow!)

### **‘O’ Mintmark Style A, 1892-1909:**

The first ‘O’ mintmark plate illustrates what I call “Style A.” Again, “Style A,” as in the previous Liberty Seated years, continues into the Barber half-dollar series. Characterized by an overall distinctive ‘era style’ as per the early ‘S’ Mint pieces. Fat sides, thin at the top and bottom and used throughout the series minting at New Orleans until its closing after 1909. No variations have been seen by this author, except with the next.

### **‘O’ Mintmark Style B, 1892 Micro “O”:**

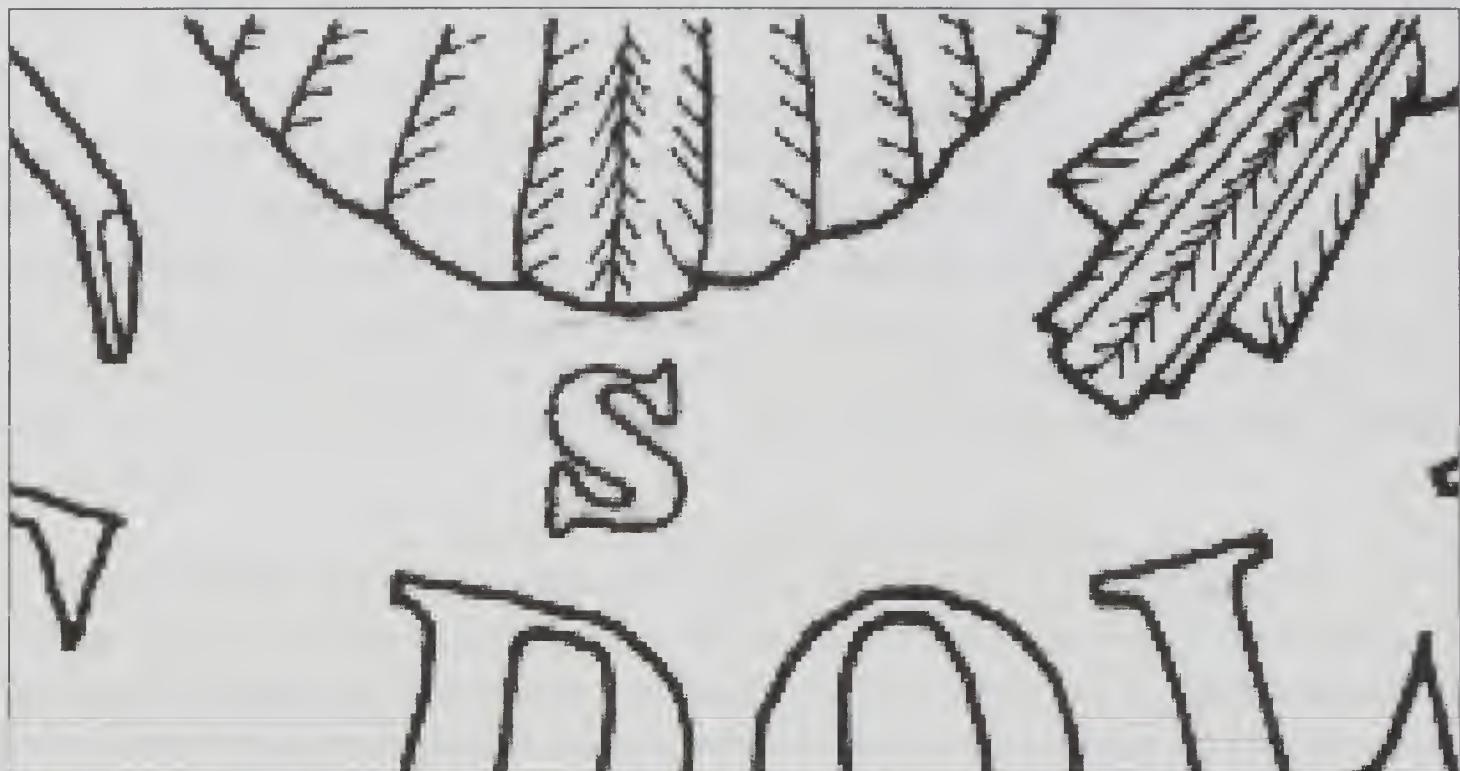
The second (or is it really the first?) ‘O’ mintmark plate, 1892 Micro “O,” illustrates what I call “Style B.” This is the now famous and very scarce ‘micro O’ mintmarked piece. Not nearly as common as the Barber Dime micro “O,” but still collectable. Same style as “A,” but far smaller. Likely the quarter punch was used mistakenly on this one die. I have to think that either this reverse die failed quickly (though I don’t think there’s any die state evidence to support that theory yet), or the anomaly was discovered early on and the die replaced, because there are so few of these to be found today.

### **‘D’ Mintmark Style A, 1906-1915:**

The only ‘D’ mintmark plate, 1906 - 1915, illustrates what I call “Style A.” This type was the only one used throughout the Barber quarter’s mintage at Denver: a large ‘D’ with fat, pointed serifs. Again following more of a rounded and wide styling. And also, again, no Barber halves were minted in 1916.

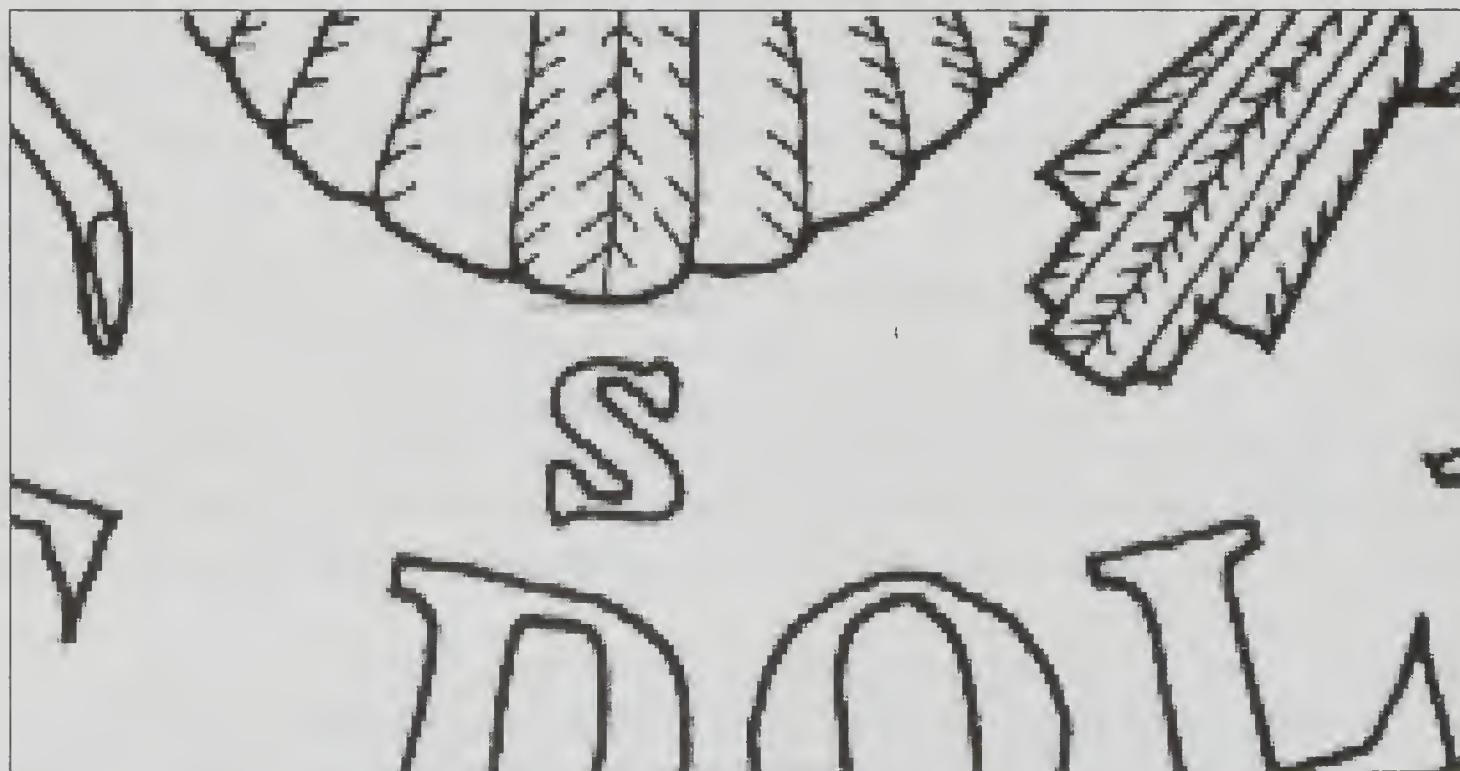
This ninth installment ends the overall series dealing with the hub, date logotype and mintmark differences used throughout the Barber dime, quarter and half-dollar series. It’s interesting because this study has revealed several new and very collectable new coins for those so inclined to appreciate such things. Certainly, these differences are more significant than some microscopic doubled die features of some modern day series that are ‘touted up’ so breathlessly in the common coin press today!

Anyway, I hope you’ve found this series of some interest and use, if for no other reason than to educate and point out that there are other ways to look at these series that we all assumed we knew so well already. I know that I have a lot more to learn.



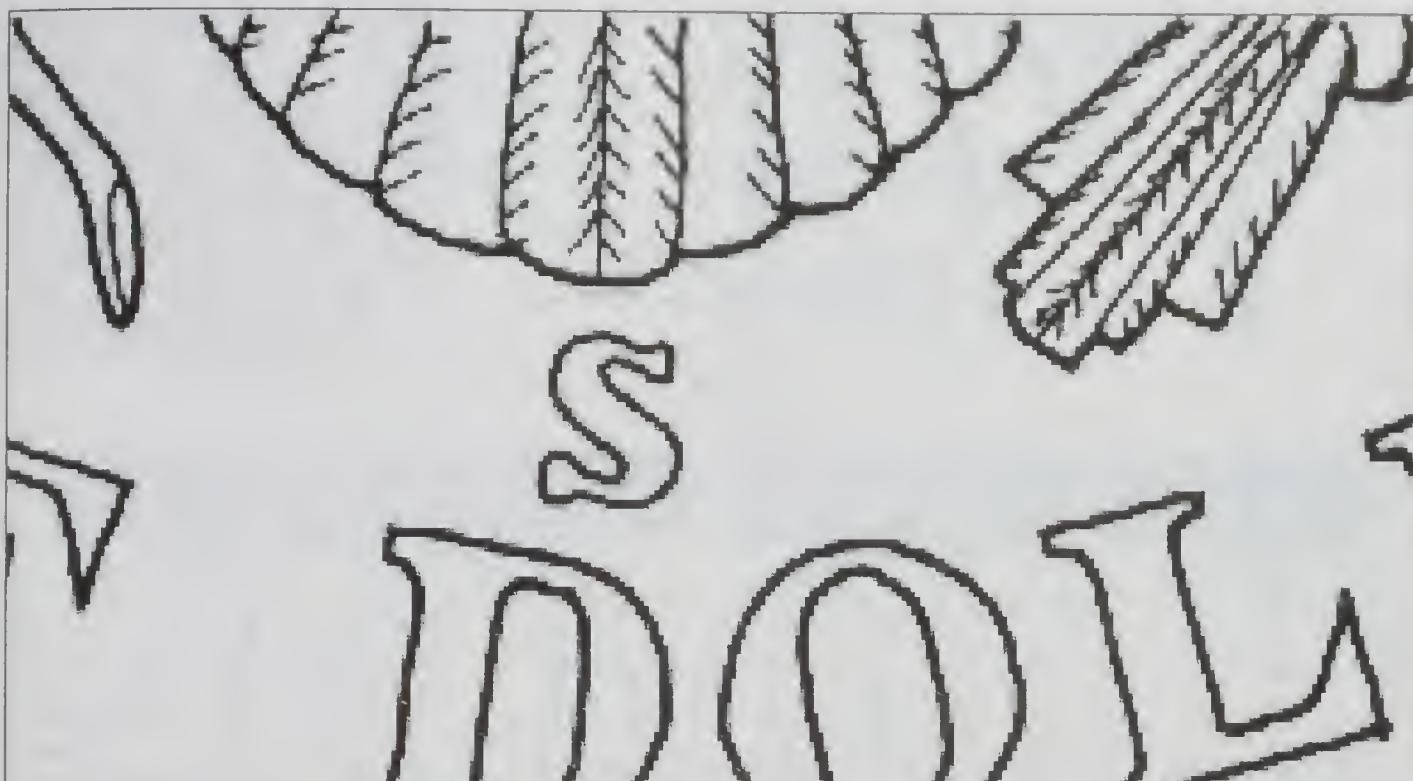
**'S' Style A: 1892-1899**

Type as in previous years - punch with mostly closed loops and tall serifs.



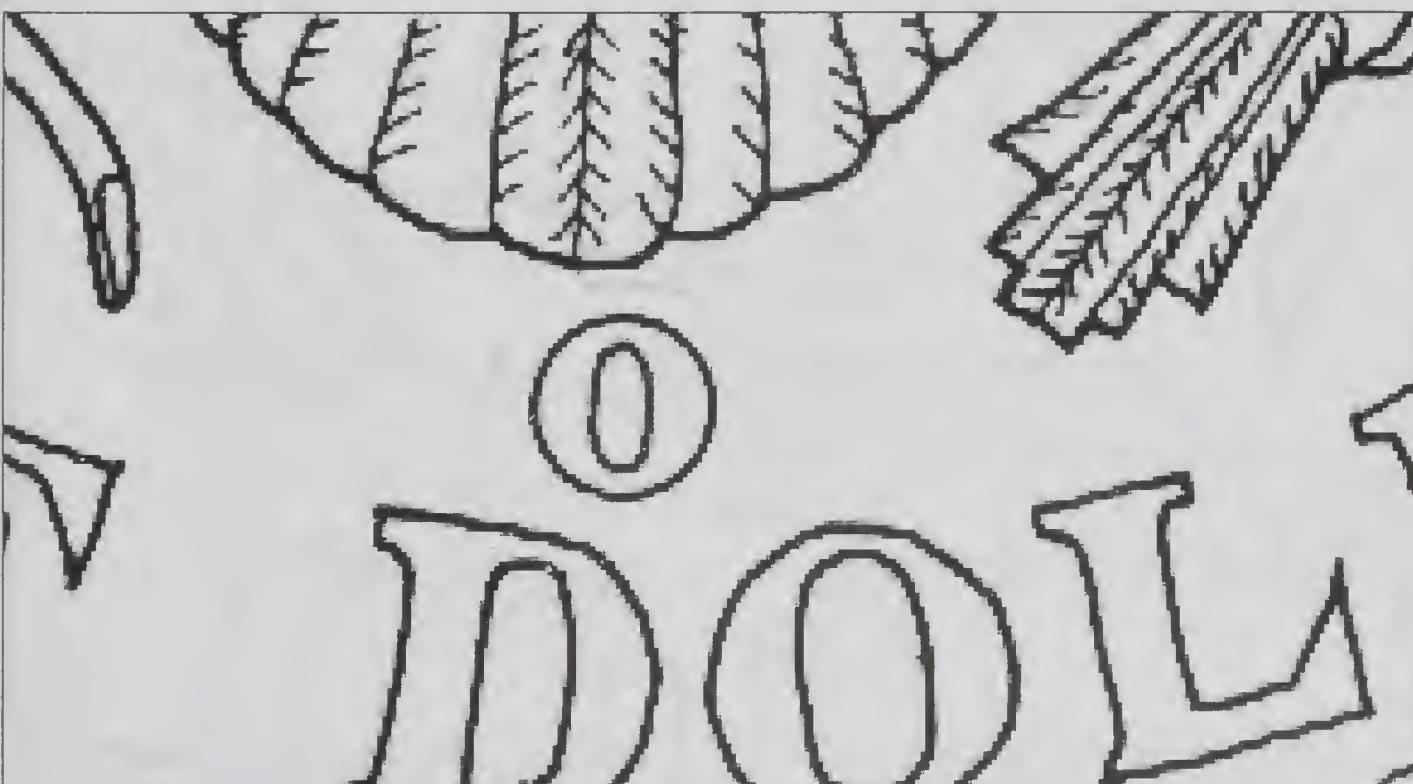
**'S' Style B: 1900-1911**

New punch - a bit thinner, more open, and shorter upper and lower tips to the serifs.



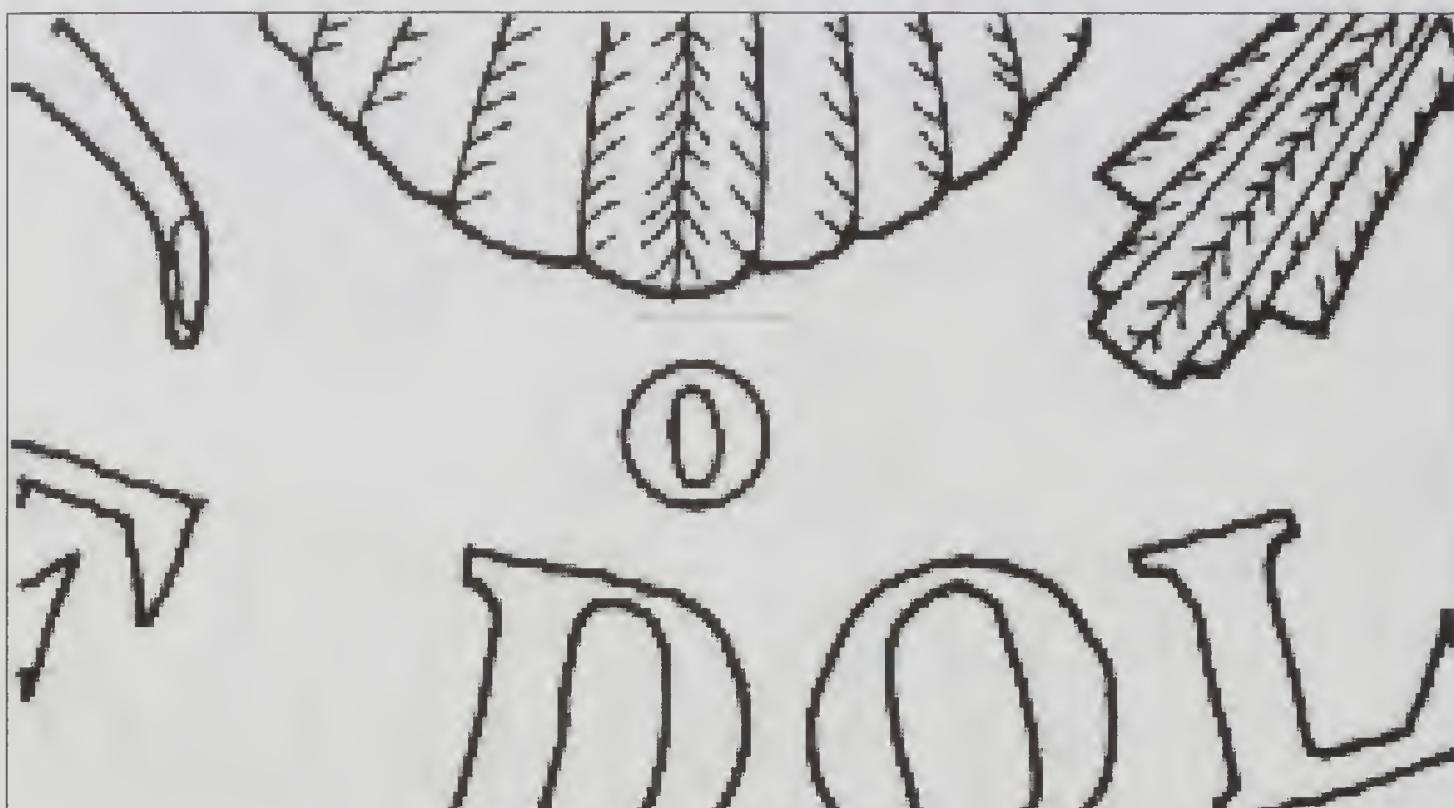
'S' Style C: 1912-1915

Final type - even more open; serifs are now just 'knobs.'



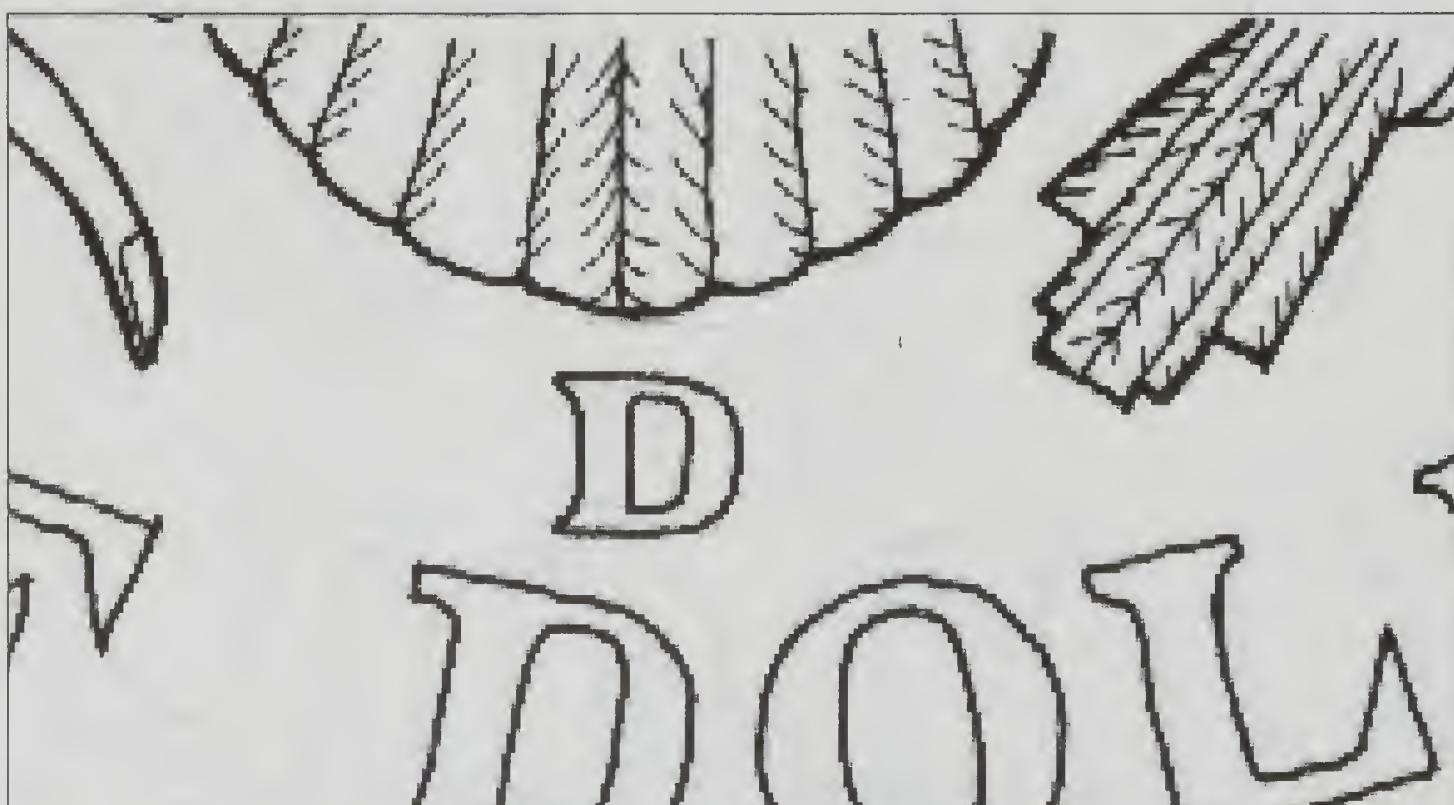
'O' Style A: 1892-1909

Type as in previous years; unchanged throughout the series.



**'O' Style B: 1892 only**

'Micro O' - from punch intended for quarters. This year only - rare.



**'D' Style A: 1906-1915**

Type used throughout the series; fat with pointed serifs



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1900 PCGS MS 66	\$1,749.99
1901 PCGS MS 66	\$1,999.99

## BARBER 10C

1893 PCGS MS 66	\$1,849.99
1896 NGC PF 64	\$1,024.99
1898-S PCGS MS 65	\$2,999.99
1908-S PCGS MS 66	\$3,399.99
1910-S PCGS MS 65	\$2,199.99

## BARBER 25C

1896 PCGS PR 67 DC	\$7,449.99
1900 PCGS MS 64	\$599.99
1909 PCGS MS 66	\$2,299.99
1912 PCGS MS 66	\$2,249.99

## BARBER 50C

1893 PCGS MS 64	\$3,249.99
1912 PCGS MS 64	\$1,249.99
1912-S PCGS MS 66	\$9,999.99

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# A Value Comparison of Barber Era Coinage

By Vernon Sebby

Last winter I had some spare time on my hands, so I pulled out the oldest “greysheet” I could find and entered some data into my PC. I started with a plan to compare the value of dates within my current collecting passion, Barber Quarters in Very Fine. This rapidly expanded into other grades and additional series. All comparisons are based on the prices quoted as bid in the *Coin Dealer Newsletter* covering the period January, 1989 through December, 2004, and include all dates except overdates (and the 1894-S Barber Dime).

## Grade: Fine

Type	Dollar Increase	Percentage Increase	Date with Largest Increase
Indian Cent*	\$6,109	233%	1872 (315%)
‘V’ Nickel	\$834	151%	1894 (400%)
Barber Dime	\$2,447	224%	1900-O (690%)
Barber Quarter	\$12,296	382%	1897-S (689%)
Barber Half	\$2,814	131%	1897-O (458%)

## Grade: Very Fine

Type	Dollar Increase	Percentage Increase	Date with Largest Increase
Indian Cent*	\$7,270	200%	1886 (444%)
‘V’ Nickel	\$1,242	148%	1894 (450%)
Barber Dime	\$3,140	192%	1900-O (468%)
Barber Quarter	\$14,614	285%	1911-D (838%)
Barber Half	\$4,799	115%	1898-O (295%)

## Grade: Extra Fine

Type	Dollar Increase	Percentage Increase	Date with Largest Increase
Indian Cent*	\$8,565	176%	1886 (592%)
‘V’ Nickel	\$1,423	88%	1888 (264%)
Barber Dime	\$4,467	153%	1903-S (391%)
Barber Quarter	\$18,917	220%	1911-D (449%)
Barber Half	\$3,723	33%	1904-S (150%)

### **Grade: Almost Uncirculated**

Type	Dollar Increase	Percentage Increase	Date with Largest Increase
Indian Cent*	\$9,982	162%	1886 (377%)
'V' Nickel	\$1,677	62%	1894 (147%)
Barber Dime	\$6,173	111%	1895-O (405%)
Barber Quarter	\$20,009	121%	1901-S (266%)
Barber Half	\$3,046	15%	1904-S (139%)

\* Includes Flying Eagle cents

There's an old saying "figures lie and liars figure," but even so, some interesting points can be made from the above figures. For every series, coins graded Fine had the best percentage increase, with progressively lower increases as the grades went up. It seems like that ought to mean something. Perhaps "Fine" coins were under appreciated sixteen years ago, and today's market has caught up with true collector demand. Perhaps "AU" coins were over-priced sixteen years ago, their prices being pulled up along with mint state coins due to the investment craze in the late 1980's.

I was pleased to see that Barber Quarters compared very well in all grades, showing the greatest appreciation in all grades except AU, where they were edged by Flying Eagle and Indian Cents. I find it hard to believe that Barber Halves have appreciated so little in Extra Fine. Just try and find a nice, original, problem free Barber Half in XF. Even the common dates are few and far between.

I welcome any questions or comments at [melva6906@prairienet.com](mailto:melva6906@prairienet.com).



### **2005 BCCS Literary Contest Results**

Congratulations to last year's Literary Contest winners! Ballot results are below. Our 2006 contest opens with this issue.

1st Place - \$50 - "Barber Halves in VF-XF: One Tough Set to Complete" by Dan Flood

2nd Place - \$25 - "Estimating the Scarcity of Circulated Barber Quarters" by Rich Dula

3rd Place - 1 year FREE BCCS membership - "1892-S Barber Half Dollar" by Scott Mathison and "Barber Coin Census and Rarity Survey" by John Frost

# BARBER BITS

## BCCS Meeting at FUN in Orlando

At this year's Florida United Numismatists (FUN) Convention, BCCS had a meeting attended by both members and non-members alike. There was no formal agenda; it was intended as an informal gathering for Barber enthusiasts. As BCCS became a FUN Member Club beginning this year, the Society was presented with a club gavel on behalf of Tony Swicer, FUN Club Liaison. Accepting the gavel was meeting organizer John Frost, as BCCS President Phil Carrigan was unable to attend the show.

Nearly a dozen Barber enthusiasts were in attendance. We discussed the Society, provided sample Journals for all to see, requested feedback on our web site, and talked about some of our other activities, including the Barber Quarters Census and Rarity Survey, but mostly we just discussed Barbers. There was a roundtable where those in attendance could share their interests, and their success in finding some decent Barbers on the show floors or in auctions. BCCS member Steve Duckor, well known for his registry sets of Barbers, discussed a couple of observations of the market for high-end Barbers, and voiced the satisfaction of the strong performance at the Heritage auction of his Barber Dime collection as part of the show. Steve noted that currently there are only a couple of people who are trying to put together certified collections of Gem Barbers, and Dale Friend agreed. Both Steve and Dale have some of the finest sets around, and both exhibited their top two registry sets of Barber Halves as part of the "Showdown" last year in Long Beach.

There were also a number of attendees that focus primarily on coins at the G-VG level, and have noted that even these coins had gotten much harder to find at that grade level. Another attendee only buys 1913-S dimes and has a goal to obtain a roll of them. There was a general agreement among all present that attractive Barbers are as hard as ever to find, at pretty much all grade levels.

Finally there was a show-and-tell session, where several attendees brought items to show. I brought an AU 1904-S half and an AU 1909-O quarter. Dale Friend was kind enough to bring his 1909-O quarter from his registry set. A PCGS MS66, the coin was a wonder to behold. The beautiful toning and strong strike made it not only the nicest 1909-O quarter I have ever come across, but probably the most attractive Barber Quarter of any date that I have ever had the privilege to see. Thanks Dale for bringing that to share with the group. We all enjoyed it. Even though the bourse was in full swing, most of us hung out for a full 90 minutes

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before we decided to give up the meeting room.

We look forward to meeting everyone at FUN next year. As a Member Club, the Society will plan on making the FUN BCCS meeting an annual event, so please plan on joining us next January in Orlando!

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## Barber Quarter Census and Rarity Survey -- Update

The Census and Rarity Survey is in full swing. As of mid-February, over 80 people have submitted Census forms, including nearly 20 non-members of BCCS. Several thousand Barber Quarters have been reported so far in all grades. Most people are reporting all of their pieces, whereas a few are only reporting their primary or best coins. Of course, having details on duplicates in lower grades is helpful because it will give us a better idea on the distribution of relative availability of the different dates. Feel free to amend any already submitted census form via the website -- just remark in the Comments section if the new submission is a revision or addition to a previously submitted form. And remember, the Census and Survey are open to non-members as well.

As for the Rarity Survey, we are also getting a pretty reasonable response, though predictably, not quite as extensive as the Census. Numerous people are commenting that, for the most part, they agree with the Rarity Ratings in David Lawrence's *Complete Guide to Barber Quarters* reference book, and are only submitting Rarity Ratings for those coins which they feel need updating. Others focus their collecting interests on creating a set in a specific grade range, thus they are only suggesting Rarity Ratings for coins of those specific grades. Both of these approaches are excellent, and should provide us with some really useful information.

Hopefully, we will also get some interest at the upcoming Spring ANA in Atlanta as well, so the on-line deadline for submittal via the website will be extended to April 15th to give other Barber enthusiasts who we meet at the Atlanta ANA a chance to offer their opinions. Thanks, everyone, for your support of this important activity. Detailed results will be published in the *Journal*, and also on the website.

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## Good Things Come in Pairs!

While looking through some of my collection, I was struck by the fact that several of my key coins were acquired in pairs. On May 15, 2002, I found a 1901-S

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and 1913-S Barber Quarter in a favorite dealer's inventory. I swallowed hard several times and purchased both. Thank God! - as I haven't seen their equals since.

On March 13, 2003, the same dealer offered me a "deal" on an uncirculated 1884-S and 1889-CC Morgan Dollar. On this occasion I swallowed hard and backed down. I passed on the 1889-CC. This is my biggest numismatic regret so far.

On May 20, 2005, I reviewed another dealer's inventory and, to my surprise, there sat two coins I had been searching for - uncirculated examples of the 1894-O and 1895-O Barber Dimes. I quickly pulled the trigger.

Is it just a coincidence or do the coin gods send me (or collectors in general) those special coins in pairs? Is this a test of my willingness to "break" my collecting budget?

Finally, notice the dates of acquisition. Spring has been very, very good to me!

Steve Merrill

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#### Letters to the Editor

...I would also like to make a suggestion regarding our survey. Could we, or should we, go one step farther and ask about other coins designed by C.E.B.? I would like to see that happen. Just a thought on my part...

Brian Bomer

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## Barber Barter

I am a collector seeking 7 Barber Halves: the 1902-P, 1905-O, 1906-P, D and O, 1914-S, and 1915-S in grades AU-55 - MS-63. If you have coins that are not toned or cleaned, are well-struck (realizing there are exceptions for 'O' Mint's weakness), with reasonably clean fields and good luster, please contact Tom by phone at 870-353-6153. Request 10 day return if not satisfied. Will pay more than dealers or *Coin World* if you've got what I need.

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